

Lesbian Organisation Rijeka – LORI
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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF LORI ORGANISATION

Lesbian Organisation Rijeka – LORI is committed to respecting and promoting children's rights, acting in their best interests, keeping them safe and protecting them from all forms of abuse and harm

Lesbian Organisation Rijeka - LORI

Lesbian Organisation Rijeka - LORI was founded in 2000 with aim to inform and sensitise the public to accept LGBTIQ+ persons, to eradicate prejudice and homo/bi/transphobia, to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender/sex identity and/or gender expression, and to achieve full equality under the law.

The organisation achieves its goals through five interconnected and intertwined programme areas:

1. Combating homo/bi/transphobia in educational system
2. Support and empowering the LGBTIQ community
3. Combating discrimination and advancing rights of the LGBTI persons
4. Queer Culture
5. Education on LGBTIQ topics and gender equality

LORI vision:

Lesbian Organisation Rijeka - LORI believes in the right of every individual to create and shape their identity and/or identities in accordance with their heterogeneity, guided exclusively by their individual sexuality and gender – rather than by given heteronormative rules and the binary system – and enjoying all the rights they are entitled to. The vision of LORI is to ensure a democratic civil society in which persons are not discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression; a society dominated by the values of non-violence, equality and acceptance of difference, which promotes the freedom of living and expressing one's sexual and gender individuality.

LORI mission:

The aim of LORI is to promote and protect the human rights, identity and culture of the LGBTIQ+ population, to inform and sensitise the public to accept the LGBTIQ community, to eradicate prejudice and homo/bi/transphobia in society, to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, and empower and ensure support for LGBTIQ+ persons.

LORI works with youth and children (people under 18 years of age) in the framework of several programs (especially as part of programme Combating homo/bi/transphobia in educational system) through workshops, education, lectures. Accordingly this policy should lay the groundwork for working with them.

LORI acts in accordance with the Child Protection Policy based on:

- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (Art. 19);
- General Comment No. 13 (2011) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence;
- Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (Art. 64, 65);
- Croatia Family Law;
- Croatian Domestic Violence Protection Act;
- Domestic Violence Protocol; Protocol for conduct in cases of violence between children or young people

Child Protection Policy

LORI is committed to respecting and promoting children's rights, acting in their best interests, keeping them safe and protecting them from all forms of abuse and harm. We developed this Policy to ensure the highest standards of professional behaviour and personal practice and to ensure no harm occurs in any situation to children during their involvement in any of the Association's activities and programmes.

Child Protection Policy applies to:

- All LORI staff
- All those acting on behalf of LORI, such as volunteers, external associates, trainers and who provide services for LORI
- Any partner organisations working in the programmes involving children.

Objectives

- To make LORI staff, associates and partner organisations aware about all aspects of child protection and all the procedure about the prevention, disclosure, reporting and responding to abuses.
- To ensure that all LORI staff, associates and partner organisations are well supported in meeting their roles and responsibilities in protecting children.

- To ensure that all children involved in actions and programmes directly implemented or supported by LORI are kept safe from all forms of abuse and harm and that any concerns we have about children's safety within the communities in which we work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Definitions under the Child Protection Policy

Children

In line with the UNCRC, for the purposes of the present Policy, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. (UNCRC Article 1).

Abuse

In line with WHO definitions, child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Physical abuse is defined as those acts that cause actual physical harm or have the potential for harm.

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development.

Sexual abuse is defined as those acts where a perpetrator uses a child for sexual gratification. It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect refers to the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's physical or cognitive development.

Violence is defined as physical, psychological (psychosocial), and sexual violence to children through abuse, neglect or exploitation, as acts of commission or omission in direct or indirect forms, that endanger or harm the child's dignity, physical, psychological, or social status, or development.

Trafficking in persons (Human trafficking) means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in previous sentence is irrelevant where any of the means set in previous sentence have

been used. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered human trafficking even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in first sentence.

Appendix 1: Child Protection Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct includes guidance on ethical and proper standards of behaviour and defines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of adults towards children. LORI considers all forms of abuse and harm towards children to be unacceptable. Any form of unacceptable behaviour which breaches this Code of Conduct must be reported.

Do:

- Treat all children with respect and equally.
- Encourage and respect children's voices and views.
- Plan activities in such a way to minimise the risk of harm.
- Develop special measures/supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children from peer and adult abuse.
- Use non-violent and positive behaviour methods when supervising children.
- Inform children and their parents of their right to report any worrying situations and how they can raise a concern.
- Ensure that information concerning children and families remains confidential.
- Make sure that another adult is present or try to be visible when being in contact with a child.
- Obtain written consent from the child and parent/guardian when photographing, filming or requesting personal information for activities. This includes explaining to children and their parent/guardian how the photographs, films/videos or information will be used.
- Ensure photographs, films/videos present children in a dignified and respectful manner and that the identities and sensitive information about children are not disclosed.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse and of behaviour which goes against the principles of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct .

Do not:

- Discriminate against, treat children unequally or unfairly or in favour of particular children to the exclusion of others.
- Act in any way that may be abusive or place others at risk of abuse.
- Discriminate, shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade a child, or otherwise emotionally abuse a child (e.g. use inappropriate language – whether of an offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, abusive or sexual nature – when speaking with or whilst in the presence of a child; tell a story/show pictures that will mentally or emotionally abuse a child).
- Hit or otherwise physically assault children.
- Behave in an inappropriate or sexually provocative manner or engage in any form of sexual activity with children.
- Access or create sexually abusive images of children.
- Touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- Condone or participate in, behaviour with children, which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Hire children for labour, which is inappropriate for their age or development, interferes with their education or play, or places them at risk of injury.
- Use computers, mobile phones, video or digital cameras or any other technology for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children.
- Be alone with a child in any circumstances that might be questioned by others.
- Never have a child stay overnight in the adult's room or sleep in the same bed (unless prior consent is provided by both the child and his/her parent/guardian).
- Perform activities for children that they can do themselves, including dressing, bathing and grooming.
- Suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind or encourage any crushes by a child.
- Take photographs, film or request personal information if not required for SOS's activities.
- Publish an information, story, photograph or video/film without the prior authorisation of the mentor and president.
- Publish an information, story or photograph which may endanger children or their family.
- Post unofficial pictures or information about children on personal websites or social networks.

- Invite a child to home without the prior consent by his/her parent/guardian and the authorisation of the mentor or directly superior.
- Work with or transport a child alone without the prior consent by his/her parent/guardian and the authorisation of the mentor or directly superior, unless absolutely necessary for the safety of the child.
- Be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while working with children.
- Ignore or fail to report any concern, suspected violation or violation of the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct.

Appendix 2: Complaint Procedure

LORI is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children with whom we work and has put in place a complaint procedure to cover any situations, which may arise, when service users (including children and their parents/guardians) are not satisfied with the way they were treated by LORI staff.

Complaint procedure:

In case, service beneficiaries are not satisfied with a programme or want to express their dissatisfaction with it, they can make a complaint by email.

Child Protection Focal Person: Nataša Czerny

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The Focal Person is to make a written response proposing a solution or providing an explanation. If the beneficiary is not happy with the provided explanation or the proposed solution, in the second stage of the complaint procedure, he or she has the possibility, readdress his/her complaint and appeal to the Executive Committee to decide on the solution.